

March 12, 2018

On the cover, clockwise from bottom left: Hopedale Town Hall, Bancroft Memorial Library, Bancroft Park, Seven Sisters, Lake Point and Hopedale Pond, Draper Corporation, Little Red Shop, Draper Main Offices, Hopedale Community House, Harmony Hall-Green Store, surrounding a 1870 map of Hopedale. Designed by Committee Member Zach Washburn



**Local Historic District Study Committee**  
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Linda N. Hixon, Study Committee Secretary  
Walter R. Swift, Tree Warden  
Zachary T. Washburn, Historian

March 15, 2018

Mr. Christopher C. Skelly  
Director of Local Government Programs  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Mr. Skelly:

Attached is the *Preliminary Study Report* prepared by Hopedale's Local Historic District Study Committee. The LHDSC was established on September 19, 2016 by Hopedale's Board of Selectmen in compliance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40C, the *Historic Districts Act*. The initial appointments to this Committee were made at the Hopedale Board of Selectmen's meeting of March 6, 2017. The Committee held its inaugural meeting on June 1, 2017.

This Report is presented for review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission for "respective consideration and recommendations." The Committee understands that the report will be reviewed for completeness based on the Preliminary Study Report Checklist in the publication *Establishing Local Historic Districts*, currently available at [www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc) dated June 2003 and reprinted March 2007.

The Committee also understands that MHC staff will review the preliminary report and present it to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for its comments, endorsement/or recommendations.

The Committee plans to hold the required public hearing on May 15, 2018. It is anticipated that the proposed bylaw will be included in the warrant for Hopedale's Annual Town Meeting scheduled for May 22, 2018.

We thank you for your assistance in this process and look forward to the Commission's endorsement and/or recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Ciaramicoli".

Suzan L. Ciaramicoli  
Chair



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City/Town Hopedale  
 Name of District 8 LHD's  
 Date 3-12-18

## Local Historic District Study Committee Preliminary Study Report Checklist

This checklist should be used when submitting a Preliminary Study Report to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). In towns with an existing Historic District Commission, all sections may not be applicable.

According to M.G.L. Chapter 40C, a Local Historic District Study Committee (LHDSC) submits a Preliminary Study Report to the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Your submitted Preliminary Study Report should contain the following completed sections or it may be considered incomplete by MHC. If you have any questions on submitting the Preliminary Study Report, please feel free to contact Christopher Skelly, Director of Local Government Programs at (617) 727-8470. MHC staff is available to assist Local Historic District Study Committees in developing a Preliminary Study Report.

- The format of the report should be 8 ½ x 11. The map may be a different size if needed.
- The report may be submitted in a 3 ring binder or stapled. Do not use a spiral binder.
- MHC may, in certain cases, decide to accept a Preliminary Study Report that does not meet all the requirements.
- MHC reserves the right to change this checklist, after a public hearing.

Preliminary Report Required Sections	Checklist
<b>Summary Sheet</b> <i>A summary sheet should be included as part of the preliminary study report. The summary sheet should include contact information (such as the chairperson's name, address and phone number), the names of the study committee members, the expected date of the public hearing, the expected date of the town meeting/city council vote and the total number of properties included in the proposed local historic district.</i>	
<b>Introduction</b> <i>The introduction should explain what an historic district is, why it is needed and how it will be benefit the community.</i>	
<b>Methodology</b> <i>The methodology should explain when the LHDSC was created, how the LHDSC chose this area for consideration, how the residents and property owners of the district and town were involved in this process, how the inventory was used and how the historic district will help to address loss of resources. This section should also describe when the public hearing will be held and when the district will be proposed at town meeting.</i>	

<p><b>Significance</b></p> <p><i>The significance section should provide a clear and concise explanation of the historical significance of the district. While a brief history of the area can be included here, this section should state why this area is significant in its contemporary form. This section should also very briefly describe each property by street address. This would include a brief summary of historical information about the property as well architectural information on the existing structures. If an inventory form is present, then the address should include the inventory form number as well.</i></p>	
<p><b>Justification of the Boundaries</b></p> <p><i>This section should explain how the LHDSC determined where the boundaries of the proposed district should be. This section should clarify why the proposed district is not larger or smaller.</i></p>	
<p><b>Options and Recommendations for the Ordinance or Bylaw</b></p> <p><i>This section should explain why the LHDSC is recommending the draft bylaw. This should include an explanation on how and why the bylaw is including the following items: membership on the historic district commission, what exemptions are included and what the appeal process should be.</i></p>	
<p><b>Map</b></p> <p><i>The map should very clearly demonstrate the boundaries of the district, preferably on an assessors map. The map should include street names, a north arrow, scale, title, date and legend.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• If there is a National Register District already present, a separate map should include both boundaries for comparison purposes.</i></li> <li><i>• If it is a local historic district expansion, the map should include existing boundaries and proposed boundaries on one map.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Property Index</b></p> <p><i>The property index is a simple list of all properties in the proposed district by street address. The index should include the street addresses and the total number of properties included in the proposed district. The property index or a separate index should include whether each property has an inventory form, the date of construction if known, the historic name of the property if any and the architectural style.</i></p>	
<p><b>Ordinance or Bylaw</b></p> <p><i>The proposed ordinance or bylaw should be included. The ordinance or bylaw may be based on examples provided by MHC.</i></p>	
<p><b>Inventory Forms or Photographs</b></p> <p><i>The preparation of inventory forms for all properties in the proposed district is highly recommended but not required. If an inventory form is not present or will not be prepared, a current black and white photograph should be included for each property.</i></p>	
<p><b>Slides</b></p> <p><i>At least six labeled slides that demonstrate the overall character and context of the proposed district should be included.</i></p>	

### **Summary**

The Hopedale Local Historic District Study Committee, an Ad Hoc Committee, was approved by the Town of Hopedale Board of Selectmen on September 19, 2016, for the purpose of investigating the desirability of establishing a Local Historic District within the town.

The Committee is comprised of the following members:

Suzan L. Ciaramicoli, Historical Commission (Study Committee Chair)  
Raymond E. Andreotti, Historical Commission  
Beverly A. Carver, Friends of Historic Hopedale  
Linda N. Hixon, Historian (Study Committee Secretary)  
Walter R. Swift, Tree Warden  
Zachary T. Washburn, Historian

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The Committee would like to extend a note of thanks to the following individuals and committees who assisted with this study:

Robert Burns, former Hopedale Selectman  
Meagen Donoghue, Sudbury Town Planner  
Ann Fields and the Bancroft Memorial Library  
Chris Gavin, Milford Daily News  
David Guglielmi, former member of the Hopedale Parks Commission  
Tristan Hixon, Graphic Designer and former Study Committee Member  
Allison Horrocks, Department of Interior-AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer  
Barbara Kochon, Resident and former Study Committee Member  
Lori Koller, Hopedale Local Town Pages  
Dan Malloy, Resident and Local Historian  
Mike Potaski, Chairman, Uxbridge Local Historic District  
Mike Roughan, Chairman, Hopkinton Historical Commission and Local Historic District  
Sara Sartori and the Trustees of the Community Bible Chapel  
Christopher Skelly, Director of Local Government Programs, Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Jennifer Smith, Management Assistant, National Park Service  
Nancy Stevenson, Secretary, Hopkinton Historical Commission  
Claire Wright, Vice Chair, Hopkinton Historical Commission  
Atria Draper Place  
Hopedale Historical Commission  
Hopedale Board of Selectmen: Louis Arcudi, III; Brian Keyes; Thomas A. Wesley  
Hopedale Town Administrator Steven Sette  
Hopedale Town Assessor Teresa Gonsalves  
And a special thank you to the residents of Hopedale.

The conclusion of this Preliminary Study Report is that the Committee recommends the voting members of the Town of Hopedale approve the establishment of eight local historic districts: the Little Red Shop Historic District, the Harmony Hall–Green Store Historic District, the Hopedale Center Historic District, the Bancroft Park Historic District, the Lake Point Historic District, the Seven Sisters Historic District, the Hopedale Pond and Parklands Historic District, and the Draper Corporation Historic District. Seven of the proposed districts are comprised of a total of 227 properties including one cemetery, with a total of 126 structures. The eighth district, the Draper Corporation Local Historic District, is comprised of 8 properties with an unknown structure total believed to be a minimum of 4, because buildings on the property of the proposed district have been demolished.

The public hearing is tentatively scheduled for May 15, 2018, with the vote expected to take place at the Annual Town Meeting on May 22, 2018, at the Hopedale Junior-Senior High School.



## Introduction

There are two primary reasons why Local Historic Districts are needed in the Town of Hopedale: historic properties have been lost in the town, and the town was named in the legislation for the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park in 2014. According to NPS.gov, "The Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park was established to help preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant resources that exemplify the industrial heritage of the Blackstone River Valley. The park will also support the preservation, protection, and interpretation of the urban, rural, and agricultural landscape features (including the Blackstone River and Canal) of the region that provide an overarching context for the industrial heritage of the Blackstone River Valley." Additionally, the town must sign a General Agreement with the National Park Service, which will cement Hopedale's place within the historical park.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40C, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Hopedale appointed a Local Historic District Study Committee (LHDSC) (an Ad Hoc Committee) to assess the feasibility and necessity of establishing local historic districts (LHD) within the town. The primary objective for establishing local historic districts in the Town of Hopedale is to preserve the unique character and integrity of a historically significant town. Unlike many of its neighbors, Hopedale did not begin as an agricultural enclave and naturally develop into a town. Instead, Hopedale was a purposeful, planned community, started in late 1841 as a utopian religious community during the Second Great Awakening. A group of Practical Christians purchased the site near the Mill River in order to include industry as part of their communal plans. That industry was centered around the machine shop of Ebenezer and George Draper, brothers who purchased the communal property in 1856 and created Hopedale as an industrial company town.

A National Register Historic District (NRHD) was approved for Hopedale in 2002, placing the town amongst those nationally important places worthy of preservation. An NRHD is an honorary designation granted by the National Parks Service (NPS), and approval by town residents through a vote is not required. There is no protection afforded by the designation, and buildings within the district may be torn down and altered at will. A Local Historic District, which requires a two-thirds majority vote by residents at Town Meeting, would ensure protection for historic properties, and guarantee Hopedale a place in the newly designated Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The Park, approved by Congress in 2014, covers a large area in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, but only six sites within the Park have been chosen as nationally significant. Hopedale is one of those six sites, and one of only two towns in Massachusetts to be granted that honor. Because of Hopedale's integral part in America's industrialization and the unique worker housing financed and built by the Draper Corporation, the town stands as a unique and excellent example of a company town, deserving of Local Historic District protection.

This proposal will demonstrate how the Committee identified the proposed districts, their relevance to town history, and how the Committee's recommendations address community feedback.

Local Historic Districts began to be established in the 1930s in New Orleans and South Carolina, with the first local historic districts in Massachusetts being designated in Nantucket and Beacon Hill in 1955. As noted in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's publication *There's A Difference!*, Local Historic Districts differ from NRHDs because they require residents of a town to vote by a two-thirds majority to enact the bylaw change for the proposed districts.

There are several towns near Hopedale with established local historic districts, including Grafton, Hopkinton, Mendon, and Uxbridge. There are approximately 125 communities within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that have established local historic districts, with many municipalities creating multiple districts within a community. The recommendation being put forth by this Committee recommends the establishment of eight local historic districts, including one single structure district.

Local Historic Districts can benefit the Town of Hopedale by preserving the architectural heritage of the houses and community buildings within the districts that are vulnerable to inappropriate alterations without this local regulation. By also including residential districts, the town would preserve the integrity of the historic Draper worker housing. The districts also include some intrusions or contemporary structures, as well as vacant land to help protect existing intact neighborhoods.

## **Methodology**

The Hopedale Local Historic District Study Committee began the process of considering areas for Local Historic District designation by compiling a list of all historically important structures or areas within the town. At the behest of the National Park Service and the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, the LHDSC looked at the unique Draper worker housing as one of the key areas to be a proposed Local Historic District, but this housing stock is spread across several unique town neighborhoods. Although the LHDSC would have liked to be able to include all of the properties and structures listed in Hopedale's National Register Historic District, the timeframe proved too short and number of properties too large to be included in this first round of proposed Local Historic Districts. The challenge for the LHDSC was the uniqueness of Hopedale's past, which is found in many diverse buildings located throughout town – from the privately-owned Adin Ballou house on Dutcher Street, an example of early Hopedale architecture, to the Draper Memorial Gymnasium, an example of post-World War II architecture from the mid-1950s. The hope of this Committee is that the town will continue its preservation efforts by considering the establishment of additional local historic districts in the future.

Historic properties were then researched on the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), and the town's assessor records, with these properties literally "mapped out" by former Committee member Tristan Hixon. This map had all original 661 MACRIS listed properties plotted in red, allowing the Committee the ability to view which areas of the town had the highest concentration of historical sites. This map also included properties that have been razed, some with new development in their location. The map can be found in Appendix 5. In the interest of time, no other bylaws or tools were considered besides a Local Historic District, because formation of an LHD is one of two specific requirements for inclusion in the boundaries of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The other requirement for this inclusion is for the town to sign a General Agreement with the National Park Service.

As the MACRIS map showed, some of the historic properties in town have paid the ultimate price as Hopedale has grown and attracted businesses over the years. Houses in re-zoned areas have been demolished to make room for business expansion, and some of those houses had historical significance. Homes that were demolished include the Peter Cook house of 114-116 Mendon Street. Built circa 1820, that home predated the founding of the utopian Practical Christian Community, Hope Dale, in 1842. Other homes on Mendon Street, which is also State Route 16, have also been demolished, including a circa 1875 house at 122-124 Mendon Street, and two 1850 homes at 121 and 125 Mendon Street. Those two homes date to the original Hopedale Community, which lasted until 1856. Other houses in the area of the Mendon and Hopedale Street intersection were also demolished for business expansion, including the J.H. Bickford residence at 124 Hopedale Street, which was built circa 1865, and the circa 1880 house at 138 Hopedale Street. That home was originally the O'Connell house and had been moved decades earlier from Adin Street. In Hopedale center, at least one important building has been razed. Local landmark "Billy Drapers" at 44 Hope Street, also known as the Draper Corporation Variety Store, a newspaper and candy store frequented by young and old alike, stood for over a century before

being demolished in December, 2016. Another local landmark building, Hopedale Coal and Ice, which was located in the Bancroft Park neighborhood of town, was also razed in late 2014.

Historic properties in South Hopedale have also been lost. South Hopedale was not part of the original Practical Christian Community but became part of the town in later years. After a series of financial events in the original Practical Christian Community, the town was taken over by George and Ebenezer Draper, who later acquired additional land parcels in an area near State Route 140, which became part of Hopedale when the town was separated from Milford in 1886. The South Hopedale School, built circa 1855 and designed by local architect Lowell Fales, was originally a school for the town of Milford. Able to hold around 60 students, the building, which was located next to the South Hopedale Cemetery, was demolished in December 2017.

The sources the Committee utilized came from decades of research and resources by forerunners with the foresight to consider the importance of preservation. The Hopedale Historical Commission (HHC) was established at Hopedale's Annual Town Meeting on March 1, 1971. The nation's bicentennial in 1976 was a high point in preservation efforts in the town, when residents rallied to have the historic Red Shop building turned over to the town. Since that time, the town has been committed to the identification and preservation of the history of Hopedale. The HHC is dedicated to informing and educating residents of Hopedale's unique character and role in the history of Massachusetts and the United States.

In 1999, the Bancroft Memorial Library led the way for other properties in town by being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The following year, a Preservation Restriction Agreement was signed between the library and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), requiring permission from the MHC for any major alterations on the building or the beautiful Statue of Hope, which is located on the property. In December 1999, the Hopedale Historical Commission held a public meeting to introduce the concept of a larger National Register Historic District to its citizens. In 2001, preservation consultant Kathleen Kelly Broomer was hired by HHC to research Hopedale homes and other buildings and create MACRIS designations so that a National Register Historic District, recognized by the National Park Service, could be established.

The Hopedale Village National Register District nomination was approved by both the MHC and the NPS in late spring 2002. This honorary designation recognizes the town's role and prominence in both Massachusetts and the nation. The Hopedale Village District encompasses approximately 600 properties including homes, public buildings, churches, parks, statues, and other historical elements such as street signs, stonewalls, and street plaques. It is one of the largest contiguous National Register Districts in the state of Massachusetts.

That nomination process was helped greatly because of work conducted by the Historical Commission years earlier, which included a survey of eligible properties in town. To quote former Hopedale Selectman Alan Ryan in a newsletter published in February 2002, "Hopedale played a strong role in the industrialization of America, and today retains much of its historical character and charm – from the graceful Statue of Hope on the grounds of the beautiful Bancroft Memorial Library, to the two glorious Louis Comfort Tiffany stained glass windows that grace the walls of

the Unitarian Church, to the unique and spacious and architecturally pleasing duplex homes throughout the town, the well-used Town Park, the enchanting Parklands, and pond, the looming Draper Corporation factory buildings, the brownstone and granite Town Hall, and the fine homes along its tree-lined streets as well as many other historically significant structures and areas including perhaps the most beautiful cemetery in Massachusetts.”

“With streets named Hope, Peace, Social, and Freedom, Hopedale is a place that truly is like no other. It began as a Utopian community that was part of Milford, and was known as the Dale of Hope.” Ryan went on to say, “the Draper family purchased the farmlands and created a hugely successful loom manufacturing business that helped forever change the New England Textile business.”

“The company played an integral role in helping to fuel the mammoth New England textile industry with its products, and earned Hopedale and Draper Corporation workers a prominent place in the region’s and nation’s history,” Ryan stated.

As of December 19, 2014, the Blackstone River Valley (BRV) became the 402<sup>nd</sup> unit of the National Park Service. Its mission was to create a world-class, bi-state National Park that will interpret the nationally significant sites and districts that convey the industrial history of the BRV, and work to support the network of partners and stakeholders, related resources, and facilities throughout the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

The HHC continues to maintain a strong and viable relationship with the NPS and the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc. (BHC). The Hopedale Historical Commission has collaborated with both the NPS and BHC, and has worked diligently towards the establishment of a Local Historic District so that Hopedale is not only named in the legislation establishing the National Historical Park, but most importantly included within the boundaries of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The HHC assembled a list of candidates to recommend for appointment to the LHDSC. The Commission was required to follow the prescribed process put forth in M.G.L. Chapter 40C, but found a challenge in soliciting a full cross-section of candidates to recommend for appointment by the Board of Selectmen. The final membership of the LHDSC includes members of the HHC, Friends of Historic Hopedale (FoHH), along with a local business owner, two historians, and a resident of one of the proposed districts.

The Local Historic District Study Committee continues to hold public informational meetings open to all property owners and residents, and will be holding additional meetings and walking tours to encourage an open dialogue during this process until the date of the public hearing, currently scheduled for May 15, 2018. It is in hopes of preserving the unique character of Hopedale that we are presenting this Local Historic District Study Committee Proposal to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Hopedale Planning Board, and the voting residents of Hopedale at this upcoming Annual Town Meeting in May 2018.



## **Significance**

This section and the subsections below provides the historical significance of Hopedale and the proposed Local Historic Districts.

The history of Hopedale is unique and much of the town retains its integrity in the form of largely intact worker housing neighborhoods and other important sections and buildings in town. The National Park Service put it succinctly on their Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park page: "Hopedale is unique among the villages of the Blackstone River Valley; it was born of two distinct attempts to create an ideal society. Founded in 1841 as a small communal association of Practical Christians who advocated temperance, abolition, women's rights, Christian socialism, and non-violence, Hopedale evolved into a paternalistic model company town."

The town was founded as a Practical Christian Community by Adin Ballou and his followers in late 1841. Members began moving to what they called "Hope Dale" in the winter of 1841-42, building a machine shop and chapel and living communally in the Old House, built in 1703 and razed in 1874. The town quickly grew. "Ten years ago there was no such place as Hopedale in existence," local newspaper the *Diamond* noted in 1851. "Where now are regular streets, fine gardens, flourishing fruit trees, and neat cottages, was then a rough, half cultivated piece of land belonging to a run-down farm."

Today, many historically significant buildings remain in town. The Little Red Shop (LRS), one of the earliest machine shops built in town, is a critically important Local Historic District being proposed. The foundation for the LRS was laid in the summer of 1842, when the first community members began incorporating industry into their plans for communal success. The LRS has been moved three times in its history and was at one time two stories high, although only a single story remains. The building is the only true remaining tie the town has to the industrial beginnings of Hopedale.

The town has also lost some of its links to its religious, Practical Christian past. Although the Adin Ballou house still remains in town as a private residence, the church in which he preached was demolished over a century ago. But the Harmony Hall-Green Store building, which is currently the Community Bible Chapel in South Hopedale, has a tie to Reverend Ballou. Adin Ballou preached on the second floor of the building, which is called Harmony Hall. Built around 1780, this building, along with adjoining parcels and structures, is the only Local Historic District proposed for South Hopedale at this time.

The Hopedale Machine Company, which later became the Draper Company and then Draper Corporation, was the controlling factor in Hopedale for over a century. The Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park notes on their website, "Combining great wealth with a strong social conscience, the Draper family maintained complete control over the town for over one hundred years. They provided jobs, built and maintained award-winning workers' houses, erected imposing public buildings, and regulated most aspects of public life within the community." The center of town was the hub not only of the Practical Christian Community, but of the town during

the Draper Corporation years. The Hopedale Center Historic District would include municipal and community buildings created by the Draper family or by individuals who worked closely with the Draper brothers: Bancroft Memorial Library, the Hopedale Community House, the Draper Memorial Gymnasium, Hopedale Unitarian Church, Hopedale Junior-Senior High School, the Harrison Block, and the Hopedale Town Hall. The Hopedale Police Station is being included as an intrusion in this district.

The Local Historic District Study Committee also took into account the uniqueness of the Draper worker housing, built between the 1870s and the 1920s. The Committee is proposing three residential local historic districts, including a section called the Seven Sisters, an excellent early example of duplex worker housing, and two distinct areas of more elaborate worker duplex housing at Bancroft Park and Lake Point. Several other areas of excellent examples of worker duplex housing exist in town. In the interest of time and because of the effort required to research and put forth each Local Historic District, this LHDSC believes a future committee should consider those historic areas not specifically submitted this proposal for LHD protection.

After listening to the residents of Hopedale at LHDSC informational meetings, two additional Local Historic Districts are being proposed. The Hopedale Pond and Parklands District will include the 1904 bathhouse, the town's pond, parts of the Mill River, the dam at Freedom Street, and the Rustic Bridge. The Draper Corporation Historic District will include buildings on the site of the former Draper Corporation at 24 Hopedale Street and 85 Freedom Street, and the company's office building, which is located at 25 Hopedale Street and is now Atria Draper Place.

## **The Little Red Shop Historic District**

The Little Red Shop (LRS) helps to tell the story not only of Hopedale, but of the region. According to an early town newspaper, the members of the Practical Christian Community “commenced building a dam and the foundation for a Mechanics shop” in June of 1842, making the Red Shop the town’s oldest remaining industrial structure. The building and its contents were gifted to the town from Draper Corporation’s successor, Rockwell International Corporation, and accepted at Hopedale’s Annual Town Meeting on May 5, 1975. The land affiliated with the Little Red Shop was gifted to the town on April 3, 1978. After its donation, the building was largely used as a museum for school field trips, but had fallen into severe disrepair and lacked the amenities of heat and restroom facilities necessary to continue its role as a museum until its most recent renovation in 2007.

The Red Shop is a unique type of historic site. Although altered and moved three times since it was first constructed, the LRS was the first Draper shop and therefore has significance as an icon of the Draper history in the Village of Hopedale. It is also significant because of its setting – becoming part of the Hopedale Village National Register Historic District in 2002, along the banks of a historic mill pond, close to the town Parklands, and within the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. It was listed as a contributing structure to the NRH district, and its location adjacent to the Hopedale Parklands is part of the town’s contributing historic landscape.

It was after the formation of the Hopedale Village National Historic District that the Historical Commission made it their mission to save the building. In March 2003, the town reached out to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission (BRVNHC) to assist in assessing the need for preservation of the Little Red Shop. The National Park Service held a series of preliminary meetings to discuss the reasons for preservation, as well as a community workshop to identify the scope, goals, and development of a path by which the preservation vision could be achieved and future uses for the Little Red Shop considered. The town began to identify a shared vision and to set goals for the operation and long-term sustainability of the facility. The Little Red Shop is an icon, a significant remnant of Hopedale’s important history. Although moved several times (the last in late 1950), the LRS is a reminder of a bygone time. It is an important component of Hopedale’s landscape and was a threatened resource within the community.

The building’s survival was made possible with the 2007 restoration, and that restoration was dependent on adaptation. The LRS restoration came in part through a \$100,000 grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Other substantial contributors to this nearly \$400,000 restoration included the Hopedale Foundation, the Friends of Historic Hopedale, and a capital campaign led by Tom McGovern. The building resumed operation as a museum in October 2009. Today, the Little Red Shop Museum is staffed solely by volunteers. In addition to a small budget from the town, the operation of the LRS is supported in part by funds from the “Friends of the Red Shop,” d/b/a the Friends of Historic Hopedale, an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Hopedale lies at the eastern entry point to the Blackstone River Valley, and the Little Red Shop was envisioned to be an important stopping point for visitors to the town and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. In the future, trained volunteers could staff the facility on weekends and for special events. The LRS could also serve as a site for special event activities and visitor services. The Village of Hopedale is an integral part of the National Heritage Corridor story, and the LRS is a critical element of that history. The American Industrial Revolution began in the Blackstone River Valley, changing the landscape of the valley and transforming life in America. Congress recognized this significance by establishing the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission to assist in protecting and celebrating the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. The Hopedale Village National Register Historic District was named a partner and stakeholder in the National Park legislation.

At its April 1, 2015 meeting, the HHC, by a unanimous vote, reaffirmed the mission of the Little Red Shop that was set forth when the LRS reopened in 2009. It was then established that the LRS would be about “all Hopedale history,” not just about looms or the Draper Corporation. The mission had been substantiated in a report, *The Red Shop's Future*, published in March, 2003 by the BRVNHCC/NPS. That publication provided a summary of recommendations from the community workshop held in Hopedale on December 4, 2002. Those recommendations were to help guide future planning efforts for the Little Red Shop.

The Little Red Shop is seen by many as the center of historical Hopedale, a meeting place for talks, Historical Commission meetings, community events, and a place to gather information and view artifacts on Hopedale and the Blackstone River Valley. Now a regional museum, the LRS displays some of the significant artifacts that are part of Hopedale's history. The goal is to develop the LRS within the context of the Mill River landscape as a multi-purpose facility, integrated within the Hopedale community to be a center for education, information gathering, and to serve as a central meeting place for the residents, visitors and businesses alike.

Although not its original location, the site on which the Little Red Shop is currently situated is an exceptional location which encourages integration of the building and its natural surroundings. Its proximity to the pond presents opportunities for incorporating water recreation. To fulfill this goal, the HHC continues to work with its partners to “preserve our history together.” The Historical Commission, in partnership with the Friends of Historic Hopedale, the National Park Service, and the Little Red Shop Museum Volunteer Curator, continues to oversee the operations and contents of this town-owned Museum.

### **Harmony Hall-Green Store Historic District**

Built circa 1780, the current Community Bible Chapel at 405 South Main Street is one of the oldest buildings in Hopedale. Situated on a busy intersection near the boundaries of Bellingham, Mendon, and Milford, the Harmony Hall-Green Store is the only Local Historic District in South Hopedale currently being proposed for consideration by the voters of the town. The building was originally a store in which the family of Major Samuel Penniman, Jr., sold straw bonnets and hats produced by area women, including the women of the first Hopedale Sewing Circle, which lasted from 1848 to 1862.

The historical significance of this building is not simply its age and industrial connections; Harmony Hall, which is the name of the second floor space in the building, is the only place left in Hopedale where Adin Ballou, considered to be the town's founder, preached. Ballou came to Harmony Hall on Sunday afternoons after completing his services at the Unitarian Church in Hopedale center, and, according to a follower, "fired his hearers with aspirations for 'grand objects and noble ideas.'" The original 1860 Unitarian Church in Hopedale center, where Ballou was resident preacher, was razed and replaced in 1898 by the current Hopedale Unitarian Parish, leaving no other building in Hopedale with a connection to Adin Ballou as preacher.

This proposed district will also include the property owned by the Community Bible Chapel located at 393 South Main Street, along with land at 399 South Main Street, and an unoccupied residence at 140 Hartford Avenue.



## The Hopedale Center Historic District

Although there is no current threat to any of the important municipal and community buildings in the center of town, several buildings in that area are not only beautiful but historically important. The center of Hopedale was the center of both the Practical Christian Community of 1842-1856, and of the Draper years, which lasted from 1856 through 1980. Several municipal and community buildings in the center of town were built by the Draper family, often in honor or memory of other family members, or by people who were intricately involved in the early Draper brothers' business. That tie to the Drapers has been taken into account when choosing the buildings to be part of this district.

1. The Hopedale Community House at 1 Draper Street/43 Hope Street was funded by George Albert Draper in 1923 to provide Hopedale with a proper community center. Built in the Colonial Revival style and designed by Boston architect Edwin J. Lewis, the building was planned to be a social and civic center for all Hopedale residents and Draper Corporation employees, even if they lived in other towns.
2. The George Albert Draper Memorial Gymnasium at 13 Dutcher Street is a Postwar Traditional building constructed in 1955 and designed by Rich and Tucker Associates. The history of the sports facility is mysterious. The building and equipment inside were financed through the generosity of an anonymous donor in memory of George Albert Draper. The building is owned by the Hopedale Community House and leased to the town.
3. The Hopedale Junior-Senior High School was originally named the General Draper High School. Located at 25 Adin Street, the school was named for Civil War General William F. Draper and built in 1927 using designs by architects Rich and Tucker Associates and C.R. Whitcher of Manchester, New Hampshire, in the Colonial Revival style. The site for the school was donated by General Draper's daughter, Princess Boncompagni, formerly Margaret Draper. The General Draper home was razed by New York Wrecking Company to build the new school. Although additions were made to the original building in 1957, 1963, and 2000, the front of the building remains relatively unchanged.
4. The Hopedale Unitarian Parish/Draper Memorial Church was built by brothers Eben S. and George A. Draper in memory of their parents, George and Hannah Draper. George Draper began the Draper Machine Company with his brother, Ebenezer, and he was a member of the Practical Christian Community, arriving in Hopedale around 1855. The church, which is located at 51 Hopedale Street, was built in 1898 in the Neo-Gothic Revival style, based on the design of architect Edwin James Lewis, Jr. Looking very much like an English Gothic Church, the building has an L-shaped footprint and can hold 250 people. The walls are pink Milford granite, the roof made of green slate with a copper ridge, and much of the trim for the windows and doors are of Indiana limestone. The building has a 22 foot square by 78 foot high tower at the front entrance, which is topped by crenellation and capped with a copper finial.
5. The Hopedale Town Hall is located at 74-78 Hopedale Street and was designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style by Boston architect Fred H. Swasey. The building was a gift to Hopedale by George Draper in commemoration of the town's separation from Milford in 1886. Built of rusticated Milford pink granite with door and window trim of

Longmeadow sandstone, the Town Hall was originally planned to house town offices along with mixed use commercial space on the first floor. George Draper died before the building was dedicated on October 25, 1887, but Reverend Adin Ballou attended the celebration along with several local dignitaries including General William F. Draper, Joseph Bancroft, and the former Governor of Massachusetts John D. Long.

6. The Harrison Block is a Victorian Eclectic commercial block built in 1889 at 56-60 Hopedale Street. Architect Albertus C. Hussey was hired by General William F. Draper to design a commercial building to house stores and a meeting hall for the town. The block, which was named after President Benjamin Harrison, is the only surviving commercial building of that era on Hopedale Street and was owned by the Draper Corporation for many years.
7. The Bancroft Memorial Library is the only building in this district not built by a direct member of the Draper family, but by a business partner and member of the extended family of the original Draper brothers. This beautiful library was created in memory of Sylvia Thwing Bancroft by her family, who were early Practical Christian members. Her husband, Joseph Bancroft, moved the family to Hopedale in 1847 and worked with Ebenezer Draper in the Little Red Shop. The Bancrofts and the Drapers were intrinsically linked: Sylvia was the sister to Hannah and Anna Thwing, who married George and Ebenezer Draper respectively. Located at 50 Hopedale Street, the library is a Romanesque Revival building of pink Milford granite designed in 1898 by C. Howard Walker of the Boston architectural firm Walker & Kimball. This Local Historic District would also include the large marble drinking fountain located on the southeast lawn of the property. The *Statue of Hope* was sculpted in 1904 by Waldo Story in Rome, Italy. The fountain was donated to the town by Mrs. William F. Draper, known by residents as Susan Preston Draper, in 1905. The Bancroft Memorial Library is the only individual building in this historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
8. Hopedale Police Station is being included as an intrusion in this district. Built in 1981, this building, located at 70 Hopedale Street, was included in the National Register District in 2002.

### **The Draper Company Worker Housing:**

According to the *Boston Herald* in 1887, Hopedale was considered an “Abode of Comfort, Peace, and Happiness.” The article praised the Draper brothers for taking care of their workers. “The Messrs. Draper leave no stone unturned in their endeavors to make the lives of their employees a happy lot.” According to John S. Garner, who used Hopedale as the prime example of *The Model Company Town* in his 1984 book of the same name, the town’s workers “were physically better off than those who lived in corporate towns and other industrial cities. Unsanitary conditions did not exist, and the mortality rate was low.”

That happiness and safety came, in part, because of the worker housing the Draper Company built. The Draper brothers built the first “company” housing in 1857, mostly duplex-style homes. Garner noted that this type of building was “a sensible way to build...in both construction time and materials.” The houses also gave the worker a sense of community. “Two families shared the same structure and premise, which undoubtedly caused them to recognize upkeep as a mutual obligation.” This sensible housing was quality housing. Garner noted that “the Drapers paid handsome prices for ‘good and substantial’ buildings.” The company put up twelve distinct styles of family housing between 1857 and 1915, “each differing slightly in size, room arrangement, construction, and rent.” In part because of this, workers wanted to stay in town. Hopedale had only seven different occupations listed in the federal census data between 1870 and 1900, yet the turnover rate of the population was low, especially after 1885 when Hopedale became a town. “Workers who came with families often stayed,” Garner noted.

In fact, the company town did not discriminate in allotting worker housing even after the workforce became more diverse as immigration in the United States increased. Padraic King noted in the *Boston Sunday Post* in June 1929, “With a great deal of benevolent foresight the Drapers make no distinction between the foreign worker and the native product in the matter of housing. The homes of the Armenians and the Italians and the Poles are every whit as comfortable and attractive as those of the Yankee.” He also said, “Even as the Draper Company has changed so must Hopedale change, and yet the hope and prayer is that these changes will not mar the beauty and quiet of New England’s model town.”

### **The Seven Sisters Historic District**

The Seven Sisters are distinct in a town of large, architect-designed worker housing. These small duplex homes, located in a line on Freedom Street, are considered by MACRIS to have “no style,” yet stand out in comparison to their large and impressive duplex neighbors. Numbers 109-135 Freedom Street were built between 1874 and 1889, but not where they currently stand. Records show that eight small homes were designed by Fred H. Swasey of Chapman and Winn. These eight houses were located on Union Street and were originally called “Union Row.” In 1907, seven of the homes were moved to Freedom Street when the Draper Company needed room for expansion. The eighth house still exists and is located just a short distance from its original location, on Cemetery Street in the Bancroft Park area of town. John S. Garner wrote in 1984, “If simplicity in plan and elevation seems a virtue today, these houses were certainly ahead of their

time.” He went on to say, “What can be praised about their design is the emphasis on utility, since nothing was wasted on ornament or supplied if unessential. In contrast to the houses [owned by] the Draper family, the ‘seven sisters’ were unpretentious and functional; yet they furnished their occupants with living conditions every bit as safe and sanitary.” Only one of the homes has been turned into a single-family dwelling; the remaining houses on Freedom Street and the eighth sister on Cemetery Street are still duplexes.

### **The Bancroft Park and Lake Point Historic Districts**

Since the turn of the twentieth century, Hopedale has been recognized for its extensive collection of side-by-side double houses built by the Draper Company for its workers. Around the turn of the 20th century, the Draper Company was awarded gold medals for their worker housing exhibits, including at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904; Liege, Belgium, in 1905; and Milan, Italy, in 1906. The designs earned a silver medal at the Paris Exposition of 1900.

Today, more than a century later, Hopedale is recognized for its unique worker housing duplexes. The National Park Service continues to emphasize and maintain that nowhere else in the country can such a unique collection of worker housing be found. In fact, this style of worker housing is one of the reasons that Hopedale was named in the legislation that established the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park in December 2014. The LHDSC is hoping to preserve the unique character of two such groups of worker housing in town, Bancroft Park and Lake Point.

Here in Hopedale, these double houses are known as (side-by-side) duplexes. Built for the employee families of the Draper Company, these double-house designs were built in the Village of Hopedale from the 1860s through the 1920s. The earliest duplexes were built in the vicinity of the Draper plant.

Why did the Drapers build such unique worker housing? What was the motivation? It is said that the Drapers never sought public attention for their town, nor did they champion a cause for worker housing reform. They did not build these model homes simply to improve the existing conditions among their workers. This was a conscious decision by the company, a policy put forth to help build a better, perhaps even the best, business. They built these superior houses for workers, making Hopedale as attractive as possible, with the thought of attracting a high class labor force. This housing appealed to families more than row houses or elevated flats. These duplexes offered more space than a detached single family home. Still, the building of such homes was a business proposition: good homes attract good workers, keeping workers healthy and content.

What were some of the other business benefits to building the double house worker housing? The homes did not appear small and, because of shared walls and services, cost less per unit to construct. More homes could be built in each planned neighborhood, taking up much less space than the same number of detached housing units. This left more open area for landscaping. Unlike Draper’s competitors in surrounding mill towns which were building larger tenements to accommodate their growing workforce, the planned and uniquely designed worker housing in Hopedale was more consistent with houses established by the earlier community. These uniquely

planned duplex neighborhoods would be less costly to replace if seriously damaged or destroyed by fire. Another advantage over larger tenements was that they could be built in limited numbers as the need arose. Workers would be housed near the plant, allowing them to walk between home and work or return at noon for a hot meal. Yet, all would be able to enjoy a yard and a degree of privacy.

**Bancroft Park** is an excellent example of the early Draper double-houses built for their workers. The site plan, originally a subdivision of thirty double houses, was designed and overseen by landscape architect Warren Henry Manning. The duplexes were designed by several architects under contract to the Draper Company, among them Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., J. William Beal, Walker & Kimball, and Peabody & Stearns, all of Boston; and Robert Allen Cook of Milford. The earliest houses at the center of the neighborhood line the curve of the road and face outward. The neighborhood's later double houses were built at the periphery (ca. 1900 – 1903) and face inward. The subdivision is largely Colonial Revival in style, and boasts the best collection of turn-of-the-century Colonial Revivals in Hopedale.

Unique to this planned neighborhood are the service roads. The inner loop of homes has a service road that provides access to the rear of each home. In earlier times, all deliveries and collections including coal, ice, food, dairy, milk, trash collection, and later even parking, took place in back of each house using the common (back) service roadway. This feature helped keep the front of all homes, including the lawns and gardens, in pristine condition. This was a requirement of the Company during the employee rental period to continue as a tenant.

**The Lake Point Group** is the next proposed area of concentrated double house development in Hopedale Village. This subdivision of many duplexes covers parts of Freedom Street, Soward Street, Progress Street, and Lake Street and was built circa 1910-1912, with some houses built as early as 1890. Landscape architect Arthur Shurtleff designed the site plan for Lake Street. The design of Lake Street and placement of houses is particularly noteworthy. The houses are placed at the center of the peninsula and are oriented toward the water. The siting of buildings here maximized the public access to the water and protected the shoreline by precluding any "back yard" conditions (for example: hen houses, clotheslines, ash dumps, etc.) at the water's edge, which could spoil the appearance of either the residential area or the pond.

Most of the houses in the Lake Point Group, like those of Bancroft Park, were termed "first class" dwellings by the company, which implied they were largest in size and the highest grade of interior finishes. Also included in this district are modern intrusions on Freedom, Progress, and Lake Streets, with other worker housing on Freedom Street.



## **The Hopedale Pond and Parklands Historic District**

The Dale was chosen purposefully by the 1841 Practical Christian Community because of its river. Founder Adin Ballou had the area surveyed by Newell Nelson, Esq., mostly to determine if the fall of the river could be used “for mechanical purposes.” As Ballou said in his autobiography, “This was a farm in Milford containing 258 acres, which had a considerable stream of water called Mill River running through it, with a good fall for mill sites, and other natural advantages suited to our prospective needs.”

John S. Garner noted the importance of the Mill River to the creation of Hopedale, and its subsequent transformation into a *Model Company Town*: “Ballou located his community at the upper end of a valley. Though a portion of the valley was acceptable for cultivation, its principal asset was the Mill River, a tributary of the Blackstone, which offered a source of waterpower for industrial use.” There had been mills on the river, including the Benjamin Albee gristmill, since 1664 when the town was part of Mendon, and the river contained a falls which Ballou saw as necessary to create the industrial base he wanted for the new Community.

“Waterpower not land was to be the central physical influence on their future; from the beginning, the City of God to which they aspired was to be a godly version of the mill towns that had marked the progress of their region,” Edward K. Spann wrote in his history of the town, adding that many of the members future land purchases were done “to assure sufficient waterpower.”

Today, the Hopedale Pond and the abutting Parklands are a throw-back – the Pond to the early Practical Christian Community and the first machine shops built on its shores to create industry and secure the town’s financial future; and the Parklands, a reminder of the paternalistic Draper years, just after Hopedale became its own town, and the reform era of the late Victorian age when cities created natural park spaces for crowded urban dwellers.

But Hopedale wasn’t a city. However, the town was interested in creating a park area, one that would be different than the nearby town park with its mowed grass and sports grounds. The land for that park was found in wooded land that surrounded part of the Hopedale Pond and the Mill River.

According to a 1980 retrospective article in the *Milford Daily News*, a “larger tract was selected with reference to the future growth of the town, it being back land not fitted for building purposes,” and the “park commissioners stated in their report for 1899 that Hopedale should congratulate itself on the ownership of lands more extensive than are held by many cities and including natural features that many more elaborate reservations fail to realize.”

In 1899, Warren Henry Manning, a colleague of Frederick Law Olmstead, was chosen to design the Parklands. According to local historian and Hopedale resident, Dan Malloy, “Manning was probably the second most famous landscape architect of that era, and he had worked with the No. 1 man in that business, Frederick Law Olmstead. To this day, much of what we see in the layout of the Parklands is the result of Manning’s design.”

A bridge which would become locally known as the Rustic Bridge (or simply “the Rustic”) was constructed at the far end of the pond on the western side of the Mill River. “In 1901,” the *Daily News* article said, “the bridge was raised enough to allow boat clearance beneath it, and Maroney’s Grove, a tract of pine timber, was cleaned up in order to be used by picnic parties.”

The park was accessible by the trolley electric car system, with areas for woodland walking and grassland picnics. “The entire area was available by boats and a boat landing was built near the bridge,” the *Daily News* noted. A bathhouse was built on the pond in 1904. That same year, a report of the Park Commissioners stated, “The bath house was ready for use early in the season, and has been very well patronized. Mr. Durgin, our superintendent, has been in charge, and has kept the actual detail of the number of baths taken and the parties having baths. The total for the season figures 1971, the greatest in any one day being 79.” A notice dated June 24, 1904 gave the open times from 3:30 to 5:30 and 6:30 to 7:30 “except Sundays and holidays and days on which the weather is unsuitable for bathing. The flag will be shown when the bath house is open to the public.”

The bathhouse continued to be used for decades after it was built, including during World War II. A Park Commission Report of 1945 described a busy summer as the war was winding down. “The bathhouse was a popular spot during the hot summer months, being the center of interest for the children during the day, and used to good advantage on weekends and during the long evenings by adults. Due again to the curtailed travel conditions, as a result of the war, the bathhouse was kept open on Sundays and Holidays.” Many of Hopedale’s native residents remember swimming lessons at the town beach, and using the bathhouse to dry off and change. The building still exists on the Parklands property, and it, along with Hopedale Pond and the dam at Freedom Street, are included in this proposed local historic district.

## The Draper Corporation Historic District

In many ways, the history of the Draper Corporation is the history of Hopedale. Ebenezer Draper was an early follower of Adin Ballou, considered to be the founder of Hopedale, and came to Hopedale with those first Practical Christian Community members. Ebenezer had inherited the patent to a weaving temple from his father, Ira Draper; the device stretches cloth width-wise on the loom, making it more quickly and evenly woven. Because the Community rejected communism as a founding principle, individual businesses like Ebenezer's were able to grow and, in some cases, thrive.

A true Practical Christian who believed in sharing the profits of his business, Ebenezer Draper was not necessarily the best of businessmen. He used the extra revenue from the weaving temple production to shore up the community by purchasing shares of community stock. Ebenezer's brother, George, joined the Community in 1855. As the eldest son, Ebenezer held his father's patent, but George wanted to expand what would become a family business.

Unlike his brother, George Draper was an intelligent businessman. He had already formed a partnership with Warren Dutcher, buying his patent on an improved temple, and enticing Dutcher to come to town to manufacture the product. According to Edward K. Spann, George Draper was not content to be a simple machinist or even business owner in this Practical Christian socialist community. Spann wrote in his history of Hopedale, "Ballou had envisioned a society in which everyone would be content with rewards for their talents within the limits acceptable to a small-town middle class, but the idea of limiting income to the wages of a first-class operative and dividends to 4 percent was intolerable to Draper."

When the Practical Christian Community hit a financial rough patch in 1856 under the leadership of Ebenezer Draper, the Draper brothers decided to help the members by essentially taking over. By that time, the brothers owned three-quarters of the joint stock in the town, and their intervention seemed providential. Adin Ballou wrote about the takeover later in his autobiography, describing George Draper as having "only dubious faith in Community life. He was a natural born man of the world, given to money-making, impatient of high ideals, but thoroughly honest in his opinions, upright in his dealings, and of unquestioned integrity and honor. He was moreover inflexible of will and purpose, and when once determined upon an object, he pursued it without hesitation or prevarication."

The move positioned George Draper to build what would become New England's largest textile machinery company in a town he and his company controlled, right down to the simplest detail. "Overseeing development was a single enterprise; all factories, houses, and community facilities were built to serve the company and its work force," John S. Garner wrote in *The Model Company Town* in 1984. "As if to ensure residential expansion and permanence, streets and sidewalks were singled out for special attention. They presented the image of a well-cared-for town and were often cited by visitors for their outstanding condition."

The creation of Hopedale was deliberate. The Draper Company, which would later become Draper Corporation, began building housing for its workers. Those houses could have been cheaply constructed, but George Draper was creating a town that would reflect his company and attract the best and brightest workers to the area. "Draper insisted upon building well-constructed streets, factories, and houses, and thus quality design followed in turn from the product to the town," Garner noted. And that opinion is reflected in the writings of the period. An article from the *Boston Herald* stated in 1887, "The Messrs. Draper leave no stone unturned in their endeavors to make the lives of their employees a happy lot. Good and remunerative wages are paid, and the employment is steady and reliable. A faithful and skilled workman is assured of a life situation, and thus he can have no apprehensions with regard to his latter days."

Even the next generation wanted to continue the perfection that became Hopedale. William F. Draper, George's son, did not even allow street signs to clutter the beauty of the town. According to Garner, William wanted so much to showcase the "natural setting with wide vistas that he refused to place distractive numbers or addresses on company houses. Not until after the turn of the century was mail delivered to an individual's home. The result of site protection enabled Hopedale to maintain as much as possible the naturalness of its environment and to avoid all the ugly man-made obstacles that normally obstruct yards and streets."

The Draper vision worked, and the town and the corporation grew. The remaining existing Draper plant buildings, which include several buildings at 24 Hopedale Street and others on abutting property at 85 Freedom Street, are a visual fixture in town, but have fallen into disrepair through years of vacancy and neglect. But the Draper main corporate office is another matter. Built between 1910 and 1911 and designed by Milford architect Robert Allen Cook, the building at 25 Hopedale Street looks almost exactly as it did over a century ago. Standing directly across from the employee entrance to the erecting shop, which still fronts at 24 Hopedale Street, Kathy Kelley Broomer wrote about the beauty of this corporate office for the 2002 National Register of Historic Places nomination. "Details include rustication of the basement level, splayed windows, a parapet and cornice, and door surrounds, string courses, and oversized keystones executed in red terra cotta. The Main Office building remains an imposing presence in the streetscape of the historic district and, with the erecting shop directly across the street, contributes to the 'canyon' effect created by large corporate buildings in this block of Hopedale Street." The building was re-developed in 1998 and is now Atria Draper Place, an assisted living facility for the elderly.

"Hopedale would never have developed into a model company town had it not been for the personal attachment and benevolent supervision of the Draper family," Garner wrote. And the visual appearance of Hopedale would change beyond recognition without the face of the remaining buildings of the Draper Corporation.

### **Current Relevance: Strategic Alignment to Growth/Revitalization Efforts**

Hopedale is a small town. Barely 5 and a quarter square miles in size, the town is experiencing growth in part to diversify its tax base and increase its commercial and business concerns. This town was once in the hands of a family, with the population's entire future dependent on the success of the Draper Corporation. That has not been the case for decades, and the town has had to adjust to survive.

Hopedale is unique in the world. It looks nothing like its mill village neighbors. The worker housing stock was designed and produced for a patriarchal company looking to attract the best and brightest to work in their factory. There are several distinct worker housing areas. Hopedale's LHDSC has tapped only three of those neighborhoods for Local Historic District consideration at this time.

Two of the town's oldest buildings have also been chosen for Local Historic District designation. The Little Red Shop is now town-owned and functions as a museum. After undergoing an expensive and extensive restoration project in 2007, there is little apprehension of the building's destruction. But due to its historic relevance to the town and to the history of the industrialization of America, the building should be protected for posterity. The Harmony Hall-Green Store building is another matter. Currently in the safe hands of the Chapel Association and being used as a church, the building is zoned industrial and is an area of high business and vehicular traffic and could easily fall prey to future development.

The town's center was strategically planned and its buildings paid for by the owners or executives within the Draper Corporation. That area has already undergone changes, seeing a loss of buildings and businesses and the addition of contemporary architectural styles. The Hopedale Town Hall, a gift of the Draper family, is in need of serious restoration and modernization. The Town Hall needs to become Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, which severely restricts its use. Currently, the upper floors of the building are not accessible to the public because of a lack of access for the disabled and due to fire safety issues. The town has tried several times to find the funds to cover the nearly \$7 million needed to refurbish the historic structure. According to a 2013 *Milford Daily News* article, not only is ADA compliance needed but "the air quality in Town Hall is poor and heating bills are skyrocketing because of an antiquated heating system, lack of insulation and windows that are original to the building."

The Hopedale Town Hall is one of the centerpiece buildings of the Hopedale Center Historic District. Targeting this area for Local Historic District designation will protect these existing buildings and retain that unique character for future generations. The protection of the center's beauty and uniqueness may also allow for increased commercial growth in an area that, although off the main roads, sees a fair amount of foot and vehicular traffic.

Hopedale is ringed by Route 140 and bisected by Route 16, and has areas that are ripe for commercial and industrial expansion and development. Local Historic Districts in these areas



may not impact that future growth, but will protect a unique town from losing some important structures and areas that make it the one and only Hopedale, Massachusetts.

### **Justification of Boundaries**

The LHDSC is currently recommending eight (8) Local Historic Districts for Hopedale out of the many historic properties that exist in town. The Little Red Shop at 12 Hopedale Street is the only single-building historic district being proposed, and the Harmony Hall-Green Store Historic District is the only area from South Hopedale being proposed. It includes 393, 399, and 405 South Main Street and 140 Hartford Avenue.

The center area of town is also being suggested as a Local Historic District because of the important municipal and community buildings appropriated to the town by members of the Draper family or their associates. Because Hopedale was only incorporated as a town in 1886 and was a unique industrial village centered around one corporation, the center has a distinctiveness that is unequalled in the state. This Local Historic District will encompass the properties at 1 Draper Street/43 Hope Street, 13 Dutcher Street, 25 Adin Street, and 50, 51, 56-60, 70, and 74-78 Hopedale Street.

The Draper Company-produced and owned worker housing found throughout Hopedale is what makes this town unique in the world. Created by a paternalistic company hoping to attract the best workers to the area, the housing was designed by different architects in different styles, with each home and each neighborhood having a unique yet cohesive character. The first of these houses was not sold to private individuals until the late 1950s, and many of the homes still retain that unique look even with the addition of modern touches.

Carved out of the town of Milford, Hopedale appears nothing like its New England neighbors. Local Historic District status for the three worker housing neighborhoods will guarantee these important and sometimes impressive buildings stand for generations. The boundaries will include seven houses at 109-135 Freedom Street (the Seven Sisters); the approximately 20-acre section of Bancroft Park, which includes Bancroft Park, Fitzgerald Drive, and Cemetery and Union Streets, and the adjacent Hopedale Village Cemetery; and the Lake Point area, which includes Lake, Progress, and Soward Streets, Progress Court, and parts of Freedom Street.

Finally, districts are being proposed for two vastly different areas of town: the Hopedale Pond and Parklands, both of great natural beauty covering approximately 270 acres at Freedom, Dutcher, and Hopedale Streets, and a dam at Freedom Street; and the Draper Corporation buildings and structures, which are indicative of the industrialization of the United States and almost solely the reason for the success and creation of the town, and sit on approximately 30 acres at 24 and 25 Hopedale Street and 85 Freedom Street.

### **Recommendation for Bylaw**

As is the normal practice for Local Historic Districts in Massachusetts, the Local Historic District Commission will be comprised of no less than three (3) and up to seven (7) members. Potentially, membership could include a member of the board of realtors, a local architect, a member of the Hopedale Historical Commission, and one resident from each of the approved residential historic districts. These positions will be appointed by the Hopedale Board of Selectmen, and the members will each serve a three-year term, with the appointments staggered. The Bylaw also makes possible the appointment of alternatives to the Commission, which will ensure the meetings can reach a voting quorum. All meetings of the Hopedale Local Historic District Commission will be subject to local meeting law.

The Local Historic District Study Committee decided on several exclusions on exterior features such as color, building materials, windows, landscaping, roofing materials, and signage, because these modification are temporary in nature and do not change the exterior structure from the public way. These exclusions cover all the housing to be preserved yet diminish the financial burden that could be place on homeowners. A full list of exclusions can be found in Section 9 of the proposed Bylaw.

The proposed Bylaw will prohibit alterations or construction to commence on a visible exterior feature of a protected property within the proposed districts as seen from a public way without obtaining a certificate of waiver from the Local Historic District Commission. The Commission will deliberate on the historical significance of the property in question and decide whether the proposed construction or alteration will meet the goals of preservation for that district. This will give the interested parties the opportunity to discuss proposed changes in the district, and allow the Local Historic District Commission or its designee to act on the proposed changes as applied for.

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